

View

"through the eyes of poets"

IN THIS ISSUE: Communiqué from Sweden by Terence Heywood; An Interview with Marianne Moore; California Chronicle by Edouard Roditi; POETRY FOLIO by Salvador Novo and Paul Eaton Reeve, and other features.

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REPORTS and REPORTERS

NEW REVIEWS:

Matta and Gordon Onslow-Ford are concocting an art review to be published in New York, tentatively titled *Gold*. . . continuing the line of the Paris *Minotaure* (which title was proposed by Poet Picasso) and E. L. T. Mesens' *London Bulletin*. . . Plans are also under way for a French-American literary magazine to be edited from Brooklyn by Ivan Goll; *La France En Liberte* may be the name with texts in two languages. . .

TO AND FROM AMERICA:

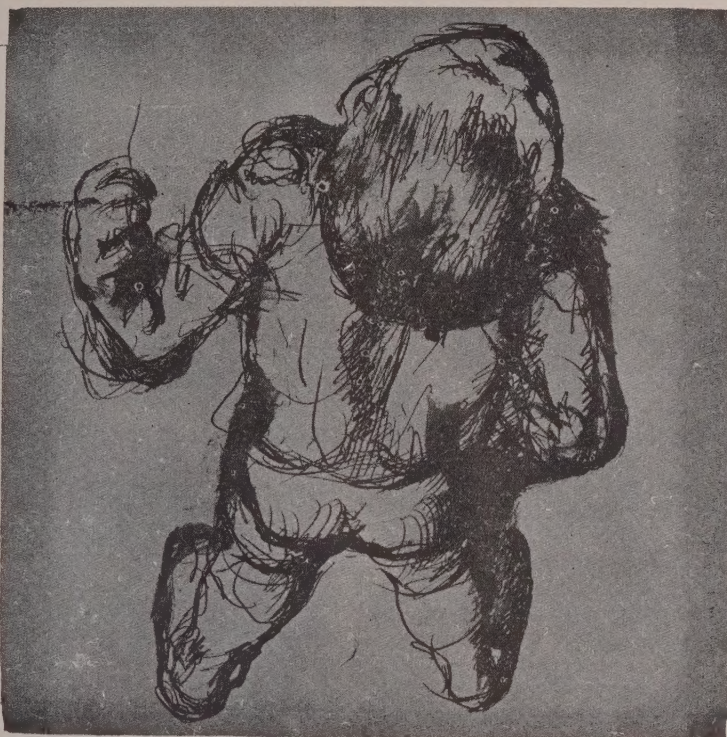
Permission has been obtained for Andre Breton and wife and little girl to live in Mexico; also for Pierre Mabille, who may edit an "Anthology of the Marvelous" for *New Directions* 1941. . . Painter Marcel Duchamp may see his many friends on these shores soon. . . likewise Max Ernst and Leonid. Virgil ("The State of Music") Thomson, now either in New York or Kansas City using up the rest of his Paris stationery, quips, "—from a burnt out fire into a frying pan about to explode!" . . . Also expected: The young Belgian surrealist photographer, Raoul Ubac, former editor of *L'Invention Collective*, run out of town (Brussels) by the Nazis. . . Man Ray in New York dreams of going to New Orleans, to live and paint pictures. . .

Caresse Crosby and Yves Tanguy ran across each other in Las Vegas, each divorcing (not each other). The new Mrs. Tanguy was Kay Sage, the former Princess San Faustino. While Caresse was unhitching in Las Vegas, her cowboy husband in Virginia saddled a horse one night and rode wildly around the house in which he used to live, firing a pistol or two in the air. Inside were two guests of Caresse, Salvador and Gala Dali, who left next day for New York. However, a reassuring wire from their hostess sent them back to Virginia, where they will stay until Dali decides it's time he took Jose Maria Sert's place as painter of fashionable portraits in Madrid. Chapter Three: the "statue plan" for our renegade surrealist consists of designing clay figures, beginning with the skeleton and ending with the whole man, to be placed at intervals along the road from Madrid to Escorial. Dali says Spain is not 'Fascist' but 'Eternal'. . .

Marriage-of-the-Month: but there are two so take your choice. First, Poetess Laura Riding to Schuyler Jackson of *Time* (after latter got his divorce, and Robert Graves returned to England); second, George Davis, Fiction Editor of *Harper's Bazaar* to Miss Gypsy Rose Lee, the "intellectual" strip-teaser. George has leased a house in Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, for five years, wherein live the newlyweds, plus W. H. Auden and Carson McCullough, new novelist.

Gordon Sylander a visitor to New York to become a radio announcer had not a telegram come offering a teacher's job

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Thoughts on "Night Thoughts"

A Conversation Between
Nicolas Calas and Charles Henri Ford

Calas: The "Night Thoughts" of Young are unreadable, I'm afraid, in a complete edition. But certain parts are very beautiful indeed. What do you think of the idea of presenting to the readers of *View* excerpts of the most interesting lines of "Night Thoughts"? I think such a selection will help us to get a better idea of this strange poet. At the same time we render him a great service in saving him from the prejudices of his time, which unfortunately he was incapable of doing himself, as a reading of the complete edition of "Night Thoughts" proves only too convincingly.

Ford: I find some of the Thoughts inspiring but Young, to me, fails finally as a poet—in comparison say with the great poets of his time, Pope and Dryden, both more advanced, poetically and intellectually, than Young.

Calas: Perhaps what you say is true; but when Young succeeds in being inspiring he is just as successful as any other poet. Besides how can you separate the thoughts of the poem and present them as material for poetic inspiration of an entirely different nature?

Ford: Young himself, I believe, considered the verse as merely incidental to the thoughts expressed. He negated the conception of art and the conception of himself as a poet.

Calas: I think his point of view correct. I believe that poetry should be made by all. To be, therefore, a poet one must first be a man, in the sense that Young himself uses this word. If you think verse is the way to convey inspiration use verse, if not then use any other medium that may fit your purpose.

Ford: Do you not agree that the 'superman' is the artist, therefore it is greater to be inspired to the creation of a work of art, than merely to inspire? I admit that Young inspires, just as any accident of nature may inspire; but I do not grant that he has been inspired as a man to the creation of a great work of art.

Calas: The 'superman' is too near God for me to like him. Why not try to be as human as possible? We must not replace God by

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Communiqué from Sweden

by TERENCE HEYWOOD

Two of the present-day authors who are most discussed in Upsala are not university men at all. One is Per Lagerkist, dramatist, story-writer and difficult modernist poet. You can get some idea of his distinct Nordic power from a good translation of three of his stories published by Jonathan Cape under the name *Guest of Reality*. Equally controversial is Harry Martinsson whose imaginative prose, remarkable for its brilliant word-coinages and condensed images, is about as untranslatable as Thomas Browne's. And yet I see that his *Cape Farewell* has recently been recommended by a big English book-club. Except for a few unusual similes it appeared to me comparatively tame: I should never have thought from the translation that here was a writer worth arguing about. In Sweden he is sometimes called a surrealist, which label even here is coming to be attached almost indiscriminately to any artist who is at all arresting. There are, however, a few surrealists proper: they actually have a magazine called *Caravan*, edited by Arthur Lundkvist in English.

In poetry, as opposed to the visual arts, it is the traditionalists who hold the field partly because publishing is monopolized by a few big houses with a conservative outlook. There is only one literary magazine of wide distribution (owned by Bonnier's, the largest publishers); but an extraordinary amount of space in the daily press is devoted to serious reviews by the most distinguished and scholarly critics. Poets like Gullberg and Malmberg, remarkable for a fine ear and formal perfection, have in proportion to the population excellent sales. Translations, necessarily of more importance in a small country, are often surprisingly distinguished. The English Georgians, for instance, exerted a strong influence in the twenties largely through renderings by Asplund and Silverstolpe. Indeed the dominant school at present may perhaps be likened to a group of rather full-blooded, masculine Georgians. Eliot and D. H. Lawrence alone among post-war Anglo-Saxons appear to have any following; Germans and Frenchmen have been much more influential. I was recently talking to one of the better-known younger poets, a translator of Shelley and Eliot, and was surprised at what he told me of the general apathy among poets towards technical experiments. With a shorter literary tradition they feel they have not yet exploited to the full the older styles and metres. Developing along western modernistic lines is at any rate improbable when one remembers that Swedish is an inflected language in which for example quantitative hexameters are almost as natural as in Latin, and that the general culture is still pastoral or Sylvan rather than urban. Ekelof, first of the modernistic sensationalists, has now taken on a soberer manner which seems more indigenous. The rather physical nature of Swedish humour probably has a restricting effect; flippancy and mere cleverness are discountenanced; poets are solemn, religious, even devotional.

CALIFORNIA CHRONICLE

by Edourd Roditi

Literary San Francisco: The Activist group of poets, consisting of Lawrence Hart and wife, Jeanne McGahey, Rosalie Moore, Robert Horan and Robert Barlow, holds fairly regular meetings. Problems of poetry are discussed in a rather confused way; surrealism is somehow married, willy-nilly, to Crocean aestheticism; and Seneca was recently mistaken, by one of the group, for an Elizabethan dramatist. Horan is the more practical poet, writes interesting poetry which gets into print: Lawrence Hart is the theorist, generally called "The Master". Horan recently shaved the widow's peak off his forehead: a bluish ghost of a peak hovers there now.

One Californian out of every five hails from Iowa; the other four are: a migrant from the dust-bowl, a refugee from Central Europe, a guy called Boinsteen who was born on the Lower East Side, came out West as a C. C. C. boy, stayed here as a cowboy on a dude ranch, married there a dame with dough from Long Island and now runs a gift-store and sells ten-gallon hats to New Yorkers in Palm Springs, finally a tourist from Peoria. All the native Californians who are over thirty seem to have retired to New York, Hawaii or Florida where they collect rents from the other five "Californians."

The back-to-the-land movement having failed since the success of Steinbeck's discouraging **Georgics**, some Californians are looking around for a new faith to satisfy their libidos. An attempt was made to boost a back-to-the-womb movement. The first convert, an old man of eighty, returned to live in his mother's mausoleum and opened philosophical shop, like a modern Diogenes, in her casket; but the Associated Morticians were soon on his tracks and persuaded the housing authorities to evict him from his unsanitary premises, if others followed his example, we would all soon be buried before our deaths and cause a slump in the funeral business by using the same caskets over and over again, world without end....

The anti-fifth-column drive is still in full swing. Representative Yorty, in the State Capitol, warned us all against "Trojan-horse tactics of fifth columns of comunazi political termites", thus establishing a new record for mixed metaphor, unbroken since the days of Parnell. The notion has got around, amongst vigilantes in Modesto, Visalia, Salinas, Ukiah and elsewhere, that all migrants from the dust-bowl are undesirable aliens, that all aliens are homosexual, that all homosexuals are Jews, that all Jews are nazis, that all nazis are communists

and that all communists are dangerous drivers. So drive slowly, if you come to California

With Southern California there is nothing specifically wrong, though each newcomer is anxious to tell you what is wrong. Los Angeles is the dream-ideal of our age, a paradise for bums, millionaires, interior decorators, refugees and retired philistines. Until we get this ideal out of our system, we have no right to criticize the annual art festival at Laguna Beach, with its absurd "tableaux vivants" of such "great masterpieces of the past" as Millet's Gleaners, the Blue Boy and the Discobolus which the announcer, ignorant of Samuel Butler and of Montreal, still describes as the "famous medieval sculpture." Until we stop deluding ourselves with such slogans as "prosperity is just around the corner," "only democracy can win in the long run," "a state which is founded on violence cannot last" (how about the Roman Empire and the Praetorian guard?), Southern California will be our reward and our punishment: prosperity just around the corner for the realtors, the corrupt democracy of Burton Pitts which always wins, the endemic vigilantism which can never last but never dies out.

In Los Angeles one faces the facts: the garish illusions and conflicting ideals which give our age its neurotic drive. Hollywood society is more "difficult" than any other society yet contains a larger proportion of sheer adventurers, phoney countesses and ex-gunmolls. Los Angeles poverty is more sordid than the slumlife of any other great city except Shanghai, yet its poor are more content and more respectable. Los Angeles and Shanghai: they make a business of illusion, a dream of reality. Opium for the mandarins and the coolies, movies for the unemployed and the leisure classes.

Such, too, was post-war Berlin. But the tide of doom overtook it soon, then overtook Vienna and Barcelona, Prague and Paris. There should be some permanent place for such screwballs in our world, a safe haven for those who are not allowed to fit into the pattern of respectable fascism. For fascism is horribly respectable: the Iowan sections of Los Angeles stink with anti-semitism. Americanism and disapproval of Hollywood. All the "best people" in France greeted Petain and Laval as saviors; only bums, fifth-columnists and people whom you would not invite into your home ever get into concentration camps. Sincerely, I hope that Hollywood may continue unchanged, a spot of nonsense in a world which is swiftly lapsing into gloomy ages of utter seriousness and hypocrisy.

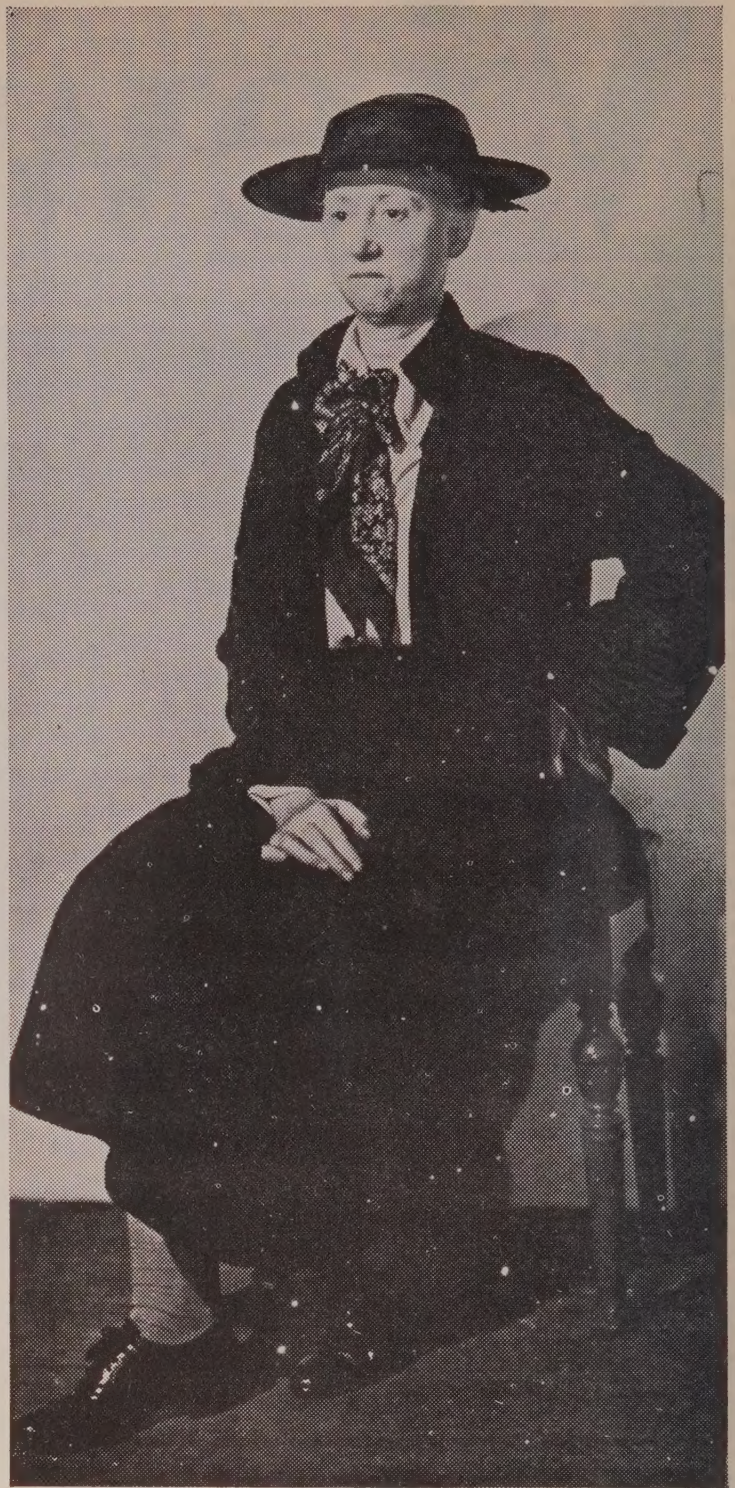


Photo by Francis Lee

Marianne Moore Strikes A Characteristic Pose

MARIANNE MOORE'S VIEWS ON WRITING AND EDITING

She Reminisces About "THE DIAL" in an Interview with Parker Tyler

Why should one who has talked with Marianne Moore feel that the interview has been primarily wordless—primarily a matter of seeing Marianne Moore, of hearing her intonations, of observing her hat, the look from her eyes? Perhaps because her poetry in itself is so verbally satisfying. Our interview occurred at the Grand Central Station, but not between trains, at 2:30 in the afternoon. Miss Moore had been very specific in her letter making the appointment that we should meet at the spot where the two descending ramps meet, like streams, and glide a few feet to balustrade, as I approached. We walked to a bench on the other side, and composed ourselves. I was more ex-

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AN INTERVIEW WITH MARIANNE MOORE

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cited, I daresay, than I seemed, for Marianne Moore had been a glamorous literary legend of my early youth, and while she had been editor of the Dial, I could not help remembering, she had mercilessly rejected my adolescent poems.

Her hat was of the ageless kind that Venus or Minerva might have worn incognito on a lark in Athens. The face beneath was small, honest as a penny, blondly roseate as a child's, with a flush that increased under the pressure of conversation. She was very agreeable, though a little shy. Her almost pedantically broad white collar was the sole relieving touch for the uniform blue of her suit, yet it rescued her from the contours of the wren, and saddled her neck with a token of the white peacock.

I can't remember how we began speaking of the complexion of the present world, but she made me feel she did not wish to speak of it, that it was too disturbing. In that direct-indirect way of hers, she brought the attitude of a good suburban home owner to social problems, and said: "When children throw broken glass into the streets, so that automobile tires are punctured, it is wrong." It is characteristic of Marianne Moore to speak first, and accurately, of what she observes in the physical scene. She is as aware of significant images as an animal of significant scent. But political thinking, she implied, is not hers.

I looked for another path, and this led to the magazine which Miss Moore edited with such distinction for several years till its final bow in 1927.

When I mentioned the Dial, asking her if she thought she could maintain the high literary standards of yesterday with the material available today, she exclaimed, "Oh, I could do even better today! Looking back I feel sorry that some writers who publish now were never in the Dial. The Dial was very experimental. Why, it was almost a scandal! One should be very careful, of course, one should watch every poem of a poet, weigh this one against that one. No, it does not do to judge anyone on the basis of just a few of his poems. For instance, . . ." Here she mentioned a contemporary poet she was now sorry to have excluded from the Dial.

"Sometimes you miss by a hair," she continued. "A poet's work may be uneven. You see something somewhere else that you feel would have been good in your magazine, whereas you could not take anything the poet sent to you. . . . One identifies oneself with a magazine." She said this

with emphasis. The pink flush was heightened by a conscience as delicate as a harpstring, but there was controlled chastity in her next remarks.

"I used to be glad to get even a word from an editor. Anyway, there is something inherently weak about a poem that never gets published."

"Yes, there is," I agreed.

As though rising, however, to the challenge of posterity, Marianne Moore then said in tones cool as an image from the Greek Anthology: "My conscience is clear."

She softened, and spoke with regret, if also with a touch of reproach for their manners, of the would-have-been contributors who had laid siege to the very door of her office. How difficult it must have been for her to sit behind her desk almost within hearing distance of the sobs of the insulted and injured! She divulged the name of a woman poet who had never been accepted by the Dial and who had most dearly resented it.

"But please do not mention any names," Miss Moore cautioned me. "I should not want anyone's feelings to be hurt."

I asked her about the theory of editing a magazine. She does not believe in a magazine as the organ of any one group or school, nor does she approve of a magazine's being too arrogantly preoccupied with the avant-garde. Mentioning surrealism, I learned that she sees some merit in it.

"Has inspiration come to you," I asked her, "in the shape of new formal discoveries?" At this, she told of the great difficulty she was having with a few lines of a poem comparing the ridges of the chambered nautilus to those of the chevelures of the manes of the horses on the Parthenon. With a great ravenousness, she desired more simplicity—that dream of needle-like execution known to those who cannot reach the height of fashion without it.

Today Marianne Moore's poetry maintains its richness and pertinence, I feel, when so many values are falling by the wayside. When the younger-than-she imagine the world to be trembling in its place, she does not rest without putting the image upright, immaculate on the platform of the page.

The next moment, I learned with a little surprise that she considers herself the spiritual descendant of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Still, this is not very strange. Between the democracy of the Democracies and the democracy of free artistic execution, there is unquestionably an ideological link.

And then I realized that there

were probably but a few more minutes to our interview. Since, Miss Moore had informed me, she was to meet her mother at the dentist's her eyes had been straying to the catholic gaze of the clock in the middle of the arcade.

"Tell me, Miss Moore," I said, "do you feel that your work is American—apart from its being, of course, universal?" I could not eliminate from my mind the notion given me by Miss Moore of the Father of Our Country.

"I feel ultra-American," she replied. "We in America, of course, are necessarily provincial—"

"By which you mean colonial?" I interrupted. "You do not approve of regionalism, do you?"

"No, indeed," she said. "It is absurd to say that Tennessee is a better state than some other state. That is the wrong form of thought. Then you might become mechanical about it and say that any American is better than any Hindu, or than any Chinese. One should not forswear his birthright, but national boundaries should be respected." There was nothing in this with which Abraham Lincoln would not agree wholeheartedly, were he alive today.

Yet Marianne Moore was to wind up our interview more sympathetically than this, using a well-known American theme in a curious way: "You must have humility toward your work. That is the way to obtain success. It is what one sees, hears, that makes one. Men are not created equal."

Was this apparent contradiction a form of Marianne Moore's irony? I could not pursue this theme, however, as we had arisen, and were walking toward the point where the two ramps fork upward, each in one wide wave, to the level of the street.

REPORTS AND REPORTERS

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back in Madison, Wisc. . . . Joseph Cornell promises View a 'surprise' column . . . Nicholas Magallanes, the young American-born Mexican, premier danseur of Lincoln Kirstein's Ballet Caravan, though urged by both Mme. Danilova and Eglevsky to join the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, prefers to study another year at the School of American Ballet. . . .

Julien Levy is writing a book about his group of painters—"the characters real, the events imaginary". If he is inducted into the army, he says, his gallery may be run by Mr. and Mrs. James Thrall Soby. . . . The Americans Romaine Brooks, painter, and Natalie Barney, saloniere, are said to be refugees in the former's villa in Italy, not far from the Rapallo retreat of Ezra Pound, whose wife plays the fiddle. Some say Ezra's famed lack of musical sense in no way contradicts his Fascist sympathies. . . .

NO BULLETINS FROM WASHINGTON: Harold Rosenberg, "our Washington correspondent," asserts that "the gossip in Washington is political rather than literary—and not literary-political either as in left-wing New York. Just plain political. And politics with a literary mixture is suitable only for daily col-

umns, which mostly get their 'inside stuff' from one another. . . . In the building of the Library of Congress are to be found Archibald MacLeish and Gorham B. Munson, the first an excellent object of asides, the second an inspired sybil of the coffee table. Yet nothing intimate will come out of there, since MacL. manages to make all his scandals public to begin with, while Munson, as a government employee, has become fantastically 'discreet'. Decorum uber alles—is the Washington watchword." . . .

VIEW POETS

Salvador Novo, of Mexico, was born in the city of Torreon Coahuila and studied law in the Escuela Nacional de Jurisprudencia. His volumes of poetry include XX Poemas, Espejo and Nuevo Amor, and he is the author of several books of critical prose. . . . Edith Sitwell has written a group of new poems—the first for four years, which View hopes to publish shortly in one of the 'folios'.

THE STATUS OF THE ARTIST (ART?) IN THE UNITED STATES:

The following is an extract from The New York Times of Oct 2, 1940, under the heading, "The Selective Service Act": Those working in industries where there is no labor shortage and who can be replaced by others who do not require special training or experience to do the job will not be entitled to deferment. These might include workers such as the following, although each local board will judge each case on its individual merits: unskilled laborers, clerks, messengers, office boys, shipping clerks, watchmen, doormen, footmen, bell-boys, pages, sales clerks, filing clerks, hairdressers, dress and millinery makers and designers, interior decorators and artists.

Stephane Mallarme's

HERODIAS

translated, with an introduction and commentary by CLARK MILLS

"... may well be the final translation of this particular poem . . . an unusually handsome example of the craft of bookmaking."

Coleman Rosenberger in Richmond DISPATCH
"... an inevitable book for literary connoisseurs"
New Haven JOURNAL-COURIER

Hand-set in Bodini types bound in grey cloth, and containing a reproduction of an original etching by Kurt Seligmann. Less than fifty copies remain.

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The Press of

James A. Decker

Prairie City, Illinois

THOUGHTS ON "NIGHT THOUGHTS"

(CONTINUED FROM FIRST PAGE)

Reason, or either Reason or God by a new idol such as Art. To inspire is the most we can ever hope for. We can inspire by our way of living or by our work, it makes no difference. . . Nothing more irritating than those critics who tell us, for instance, that Byron's life was great and his poetry weak. Such a conception of Life and Work is the result of a dualistic attitude entirely incompatible with the deeper necessities of man. That Young inspires is enough.

Ford: But where will inspiration lead? Is not the man, I insist, who creates a work of art greater than a man who is merely inspired without creating?

Calas: Inspiration can only lead us to new discoveries. Of course the man who creates is more interesting than any other.

Ford: Our discussion has led us then to what value you give the work of art in the field of creation.

Calas: In other words, we leave the subject for the object, the poet for the poem.

Ford: Yes.

Calas: Very well! All objects that we fall upon in the path of our lives may possess the magic power to inspire us. Among these objects—it would be ridiculous to deny this—works of our fellowman play an important role; they speak a language which is familiar to us. But a magician or a St. Francis of Assisi may possess the power to speak to rocks and trees, to birds and animals. Surely for these men the language of the extra-human is just as familiar as, for the inhabitant of Paris or New York, the horn of an automobile or the voice of Elizabeth Schumann.

Ford: I agree. But why do you refuse to differentiate objects? Where I cannot agree is when you say we should try to be as human as possible. Man is discovered not only in man but in God, and by God I do not, of course, mean the Biblical God but the eternal and everchanging animator of all things. . . Which, naturally, brings man to discovering the universe in himself and not in a limited conception of the 'human'.

Calas: When I say that the conception of God is a useless one, I reply at the same time to your question, Should no man become a superman? Why look at the world from the artist's point of view; that is to say, as having a creator or having been created? Why not look at the world, and at art too—which after all is but a part of the world—simply as an inspiring object? It is now, I think, less difficult to see the relationship between the human and the extra-human. It's simply a question of learning languages. Man being part of the universe cannot discover the universe in himself. He discovers the universe by exploring it in all possible ways. Art and science are the roads that carry him to this destination.

Ford: In other words, man, sensing his ultimate power to understand all things and through his imagination to conceive the universe in himself, is striving to become godlike! To me, that is the end of inspiration.

Calas: Certainly not! I am not at all sure that man possesses the ultimate power to understand all things and I am not interested if he does or does not. What I am interested in is that he should possess the strength to overcome all obstacles on his way. Why one should bring God into this I still fail to understand.

Ford: Because God is the power to overcome all obstacles. . . But if you prefer, let's leave the idea of God out; perhaps you will propose another idea, equal in mystery and hope.

Calas: It is that mystery and hope I want to attack. They are confusing notions and lead inevitably to a figurative conception of power which we see as an attribute of a living being, i. e. God. Why do we need to take this jump into abstraction? Why isn't it enough to know we are fighting against obstacles and that all that mankind has achieved until now allows us to be optimistic about the future? Why see power as something different from movement? Why look for a beginning and end in movement—which you cannot avoid if you figure them as God? As Young says, God is beyond time, but why should we go beyond time?

Ford: You agree with the Surrealists, I believe, because of the position you have taken towards Young's "Night Thoughts", in negating the work of art. This attitude I think is Surrealism's strength, but it is also its weakness.

Calas: Why?

Ford: Because real strength consists in greatly affirming as well as greatly negating. I do not see how Surrealism deals with equity towards all that the past leaves us of man's inspiration, i. e., great works of art.

Calas: I see! We have left God the creator to meet him again dressed as a judge! Please, Almighty God, tell us who is the greater poet, Milton or Young!

Ford: Are you, perhaps, calling on Andre Breton?

Calas: If you mean by that, Andre Breton comes to dethrone justice, I wholeheartedly assent! His role as iconoclast is just as important there as in the field of creation. If you upset creation, you upset justice, which is only an attribute of creation.

Ford: You mean that it is the role of man to upset nature's so-called justice?

Calas: I believe it is the role of man to replace what exists by what he wants to exist. I cannot see in this attitude, which is a partisan one, how there can be any justice. I see only conflicting interests. Justice is a matter of force. Vae Victis!

Ford: If I'm not mistaken, I've heard the modern Gauls emit that same cry.

Calas: Quotations from the Bible have also been used for disguising real ends, as Shakespeare a good many years ago remarked in his "Merchant of Venice." But I am perfectly frank in the ends I want to see achieved: Liberation in all fields! This can only come to pass through persistent effort and by overcoming all obstacles. The past, works of that past, which may have been useful may still be inspiring to some, but they also may hinder the progress of others.

It is the duty of others then to attack them, and replace what they disapprove of with new values, some of which may even be chosen from the past. Every act, creation or judgment must be the result of a deeply felt need. To preexisting obstacles we must oppose the force of inspiring work. Instead of justice let us impose our will!

Thoughts from "Night Thoughts" Chosen by Nicolas Calas

(The following extracts are from the two-in-one volume of "Night Thoughts, on Life, Death and Immortality," by Edward Young, LL.D. (1681-1765), published by Richard Scott, New York, 276 Pearl St., 1816—an edition found by Mr. Calas in Johnny Appleseed's bookshop, Manchester, Vermont. Young's "Night Thoughts," translated into French, made a great impression on Lautreamont—a note on this is given in the Surrealist section edited by Mr. Calas in *New Directions* 1940.

Poor human ruins . . .
Gasping at air! for what has earth beside?

Night I

. . . Time destroyed
Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.
Today is yesterday returned
Full power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn
And reinstate us on the rock of peace.

Night II

Death is the crown of life,
Were death deny'd poor man would live in vain;
Were death deny'd to live would not be life.

Night III

Why start at death? Where is he? Death arriv'd
Is past; not come, or gone, he's never here.

Man makes a death which Nature never made.
And am I fond of life,
Who scarce can think it possible to live?

Midnight veil'd his face;
Not such as this, not such as nature makes;
A midnight Nature shudder'd to behold;
A midnight new! a dread eclipse (without
Opposing spheres) from her creator's frown!

This midnight pomp
This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid.

Passion is reason.

Night IV

Like our shadows our wishes lengthen as our sun declines.

All should be prophets to themselves, foresee
Their future fate.

Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow;
A blow, which while it executes, alarms
And startles thousands with a single fall.

Night V

No man is happy till he thinks on earth
There breathes not a more happy than himself.

Vain are all sudden sallies of delight:
Convulsions of a weak distemper'd joy.
Joy's a fixed state; a tenure not a start.

Night VII

To think in grandeur there is something great.

Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live.

What is a miracle? —'Tis a reproach,
'Tis an implicit satire on mankind,
And while it satisfies it censures too.
The mind that would be happy, must be great;
Great in its wishes; great in its surveys.
What's vice?—Mere want of compass in our thoughts.

Night VIII

View Poets

a supplement to View, Volume I, Number 3, 1940 – printed at The Press of James A. Decker

folio No. 1

SALVADOR NOVO: THREE POEMS

EARLY

In a watery sky
Floats white lather of soap.
The city dries its faces
With ravellings of mist
And opens eyelids of steel.

It is extraordinarily early
But sleep repels me
Like a body possessed and not loved.

Cool and cloudy city,
I should not have suspected
This change of role and of atmosphere.

The soul is in a hurry, like a traveller,
As if about to be seen off
On its way to to the station.
The train sets out promptly.

The night has erased everyone's eyes.
A little duty forces the faces
To learn, to teach, to work.
The sense of touch and of taste have died.
Almost, it seems, I possess my spirit.

Ah the morning! why
Drown it in the first cigarette?

EPIFANIA

One Sunday
Epifania returned no more to the house.

I overheard conversations
Which told how a man had kidnapped her
And, then, questioning the servants,

translated by H. R. Hays

I found he had taken her to a room.
I never knew where this room was
But I imagined it, cold, unfurnished,
Floored with damp earth
And only one door to the street.
When I thought about this room
I saw no one in it.
Epifania came back one afternoon
And I followed her through the garden,
Asking her to tell me what the man had
done,
Because my room was always empty
Like a box without surprises.
Epifania laughed and ran away
And finally opened the gate
And let the street into the garden.

ALIEN WORDS

In the street
There were alien words
In red placards, in rude mouths.
They engraved themselves in my mind like
enigmas.

There were actions and results
Whose motives compelled scrutiny.

Many novelists, who have not lived,
Observe, in studying infancy,
That dictionaries
Are always consulted by children.

At night, the stellar alphabet
Combined its twenty-seven letters
In disturbing phrases,
Never encountered in the encyclopaedias.

View Poets: folio 1

PAUL EATON REEVE TWO
POEMS

MARVELS

When from the mother steel pincers drew me
Kindred florescence – adjacent heads with ears –
Gathered my cries, startled.
The ambushed surfaces of wonders opened,
Received my voice, closed carefully above
My empty eyes and waited, quietly
Quivering with glittering scum and silken shock.
The mother pressed her lovely breast into my mouth:
In sleeping eagerness I paused and drank.

Each year I viewed behind my eyes the sight
Of Space, the graceful, recoiling from my vision . . .
While in those years the puny structure of
My body grew, hardening below the edgeless brain
That gloated in nakedness and secret shame
And power above that servile flowering,
Nourished by a sun of self-belief.

I have felt sweat, like devotions, crawl,
Foreshadowings of worms, across my eyeballs;
And like a sacrament removing black
Spatters of sins from souls of flesh I have sluiced
In bathrooms waters on my skins,
Or, gasping giant, sucked them down my throat.

More biting than living spices in the mouth
Air has moved down my nostrils to my lungs
Near where, looming in thin division, beats
The veil against explosion of my heart.

My ears in early mornings have compelled
To enter their attendant skull
The wondering screams of birds, recordings
Of the clash of winds and the watchful sounds
Of my own feet
Moving.

I have seen trees arising from the earth
Breathing a universe of fruits;
Warm sun has fastened to my eyes
The sight of flowers extending into roots.

I have held within my hands the lunge of rock
And ground my nails into it. I have seen
That rock near enigmatic blades of grass
When fingers loosed their hold and let it fall.

And I have often lain in the hot nights
Upon a linen sheet upon a bed,

While decisions were reborn within my brain
From sperms of day;
And should I leave that bed, rejecting
From across the room the ticking of my watch,
Which builds remembrance of bodies in my arms,
The eager obedience of flesh and flesh
To a single malice in our mutual mind?

These things are marvels that a corpse we hold
Within the self forever comments on
Pretending to invent:
Crafty controller, scheming to destroy
The way snow lies upon the leaves, the feasting
Joy with which we touch a tree or see
Traditions of the sun in fields of snow.

Let that corpse devour what is his
And I shall pour incessantly
Into his veins delights he hates,
The absolute, immediate sum of me.

"WHEN DADDY REMOVED HIS WIG"

When daddy removed his wig
I saw the hair growing beneath
Like vines embracing summer.

And when he took out his eyes
I knew it was because the glasses
Were crying for me.

Then I loved my daddy
And ran in opposite directions
With a startled little cry
To smother him in my arms.

Daddy is old now.
He wears no more wigs.
His pension barely supports his progeny.
Soon daddy will rise up
Out of the pension, out of his progeny
Out of the grave,
And teach me to play war with my toys.

He will shoot his silver dollars
And the gold tooth he loves
Best upon its watch-chain
Into the eyes of my prying doll.

Oh, I love my daddy!
Oh, I hate my jealous, weeping doll!